Blogging for Librarians

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Weblog (blog) basics

- Chronologically arranged entries
- Permalinks
- Archives
- Searchable
- Blogroll
- Comments
- RSS (really simple syndication)
- Example: It's all good

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Why blog?

- Online publishing for the masses
- Real time, really simple
- Free blog hosting and blog tools readily available
- Got ideas? Got news? Blog!
- No library website? Get a blog!
- Great way to do PR

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Blogs vs. websites

- Don't need to know HTML coding
- Don't need your own web server, web editing software, webmaster . . .
- Don't have to (knowingly) upload files to publish online (ftp)
- "push-button publishing" – anywhere, any time

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Blogging opportunities

- News and information about the library
- Book reviews, book awards, information about new books
- Book discussions (interactive)
- Links to recommended Internet resources
- Research tips
- News or information for library trustees
- Communication among librarians (private)
- Reach non-users

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Blogging tools

- Blog hosting: free online services e.g., Blogger, Xanga Weblogs Compendium: Blog hosting http://www.lights.com/weblogs/hosting.html
- Blog serving: host your own blog e.g., WordPress, Movable Type Weblogs Compendium: Blog tools http://www.lights.com/weblogs/tools.htm

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Blogger

- 1999: Pyra Labs started the push-button publishing revolution
- 2002: bought by Google
- Free online blog hosting service
- Simple to use, yet flexible
- Add-ons and advanced features
- Well-documented

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Blogger basics

- Dashboard
- Posting and editing
- Settings (publishing, formatting, comments)
- Templates and "skins"
- Email
- Blog this

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Advanced Blogger

- Editing the template
- Word verification - reduce comment spam
- Multi-blogs - blog within a blog
- Blogger hacks
- Add-ons
  - Blogger for MS Word
  - Hit counters

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Developing your blog

- Design blog and accompanying policies and guidelines
- Soft launch - ask peers, co-workers to review
- Seek organizational approval as necessary
- Unleash blog on world
- Market
- Keep it fresh

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Blogging policies and guidelines

- Define blog purpose (mission, scope)
  > St. Joseph Country PL
- Establish guidelines for blog content
- Establish guidelines for comments
  > Free Range Librarian

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More guidelines

- Editorial process
- Frequency of posts
- Blog/individual authorship ("About")
- Institutional connection (link)
- Contact information
- Disclaimer (Rhodarian)

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Writing tips and techniques

- Keep posts brief
- Make writing accessible (casual)
- Develop a personality, be consistent
- Check your facts and your spelling
- Ten Things a Blogging Librarian Must Do (Michael Stephens)
- Finding inspiration

Blogging ethics

- Blog represents you, your institution, and librarianship in general
- Web publishing is a powerful tool
- Don't write about patrons, co-workers, quote emails, etc, without permission
- Free Range Librarian, Blogging Ethics (Karen Schneider)
- Blogger's Code of Ethics (cyberjournalist.net)

Five rules to blog by

- Transparency
- Cite it
- Get it right
- Be fair
- Admit mistakes

Karen Schneider, Internet Librarian 2005

Marketing the Blog

- Press release / local paper
- Link on website
  (don't have to call it a blog)
- Feature in newsletter
- Bookmarks, flyers, signature files, anywhere your website URL is
- Use the web and blogosphere

Web marketing

- Turn on Blogger features:
  - instant email (email to a friend)
  - turn on RSS feeds
  - add to Blogger listings
  - subscribe to your blog via your Bloglines account
- Add your blog headlines to your homepage via RSS (LORI)
- Integrate blog with library website

More web marketing

Automatic Posting and Notification Systems

- Pinging: notification service used to track blog changes (subscribe/automatic)
  - www.weblogs.com
  - pwww.ping-o-matic.com
- Blogosphere instantly notified when you update
- Trackbacks (Blogger=backlinks): who's linking to your blog

Who's talking about your blog?

- Talkdigger
  http://www.talkdigger.com
- Technorati
  http://www.technorati.com/search
  (also, what people are talking about online)

Tips and Tricks

- Adding photos
  Hello www.hello.com
  Picasa www.picasa.com
  Flickr www.flickr.com
- Recommending a book? Link to your catalog entry (and add a link to your catalog or catalog search box)
- Embedding your blog's RSS feed: Feed2js

Blog Examples

- Marin County Free Public Library
- Roselle Public Library: Blogger Book Club
- Parma Public Library Teens
- Creating community
  > Ann Arbor District Library: Teens
  > AADL Director's Blog

More Inspiration

- Blogging Libraries
  blogwithoutalibrary.net
- Library Weblogs (libdex)
- LORI's LIS Weblogs (individual bloggers)
- Library Related Blogs in Rhode Island

Additional resources

- BlogBib: Blogging@Your Library
- L. Anne Clyde, Weblogs and Libraries (Chandos, 2004)
- Elizabeth Castro, Publishing a Blog with Blogger (Peachpit, 2005)
- Why and How to Use Blogs to Promote Your Library's Services (Darlene Fichter)
- Why weblogs? (Weblogg-ed)
- LORI: Blogs, RSS and Data Syndication
- blogWriting (KM's del.icio.us bookmarks)

Questions?

A link to today's presentation is on the LORI website at
http://www.lori.ri.gov/ce/

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